



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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Contact: Cliff Weed (360) 902-2036
Linda Waring (360) 902-1815

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
P.O. Box 42560, Olympia, Washington 98504-2560

Agriculture Department disciplines Eastern Washington pesticide applicators

OLYMPIA – The state Department of Agriculture last quarter issued civil penalties totaling \$3,300 against five pesticide applicators in Eastern Washington. Violations include operating without a valid license, failing to follow directions on the label, allowing pesticide to drift onto a person or property, and failing to keep adequate records.

Department of Agriculture enforces state and federal pesticide laws to protect people, property, animals and the environment from incompetent or illegal pesticide use. The Pesticide Management Division investigates alleged misuse of pesticides; inspects applicators, dealers and producers; reviews permits for pesticide applications in environmentally sensitive areas; and provides technical assistance to the pesticide industry and consumers.

To file a complaint about a pesticide applicator, or to ensure an applicator is properly licensed, call Department of Agriculture toll-free at (877) 301-4555.

Rafael Cardenas, a licensed private applicator in Sunnyside, paid a civil penalty of \$1,150 and his private applicator license was suspended for 18 days. In 1998 Cardenas supervised the application of a mix of herbicides onto a commercial vineyard in Franklin County without a private applicator license. He also failed to follow the directions on the herbicide labels and kept false, inadequate and incomplete pesticide application records.

Steve B. Pfister, a licensed commercial pesticide applicator for Pfister's Farm Aviation in Pasco, paid a \$500 civil penalty and his license was suspended for six days. In 1998 Pfister applied a mix of insecticides onto an alfalfa crop in Franklin County. He failed to follow the directions on one of the insecticides used and allowed the pesticide spray to drift onto a person, causing illness to the person.

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Victor O. Vishnevsky, a licensed commercial pesticide operator for Terry Kilmer Crop Dusting in Warden, was assessed a civil penalty of \$500. Vishnevsky applied a desiccant onto a crop of potatoes in Grant County. The spray drifted onto an alfalfa crop. He failed to follow the directions on the label of the desiccant and caused damage to the alfalfa crop.

Steve A. Leach, a licensed commercial pesticide applicator and owner of Bugs-B-Gon Pest Control in Toppenish, paid a civil penalty of \$900 and his license was suspended for 10 days. For six months in 1999 he operated a pesticide business and applied pesticides without a commercial pesticide applicator license. He also failed to keep and maintain adequate and complete pesticide application records.

V. Dale Anderson, a licensed commercial pesticide applicator for Cutting Edge Spray Service in Othello, was assessed a civil penalty of \$250. His commercial pesticide applicator license has expired. If he renews it, it will be suspended for three days. In 1998 he applied a mix of two herbicides to a crop of potatoes in Franklin County. He failed to adequately clean his equipment as directed by the herbicide labels before he used it to spray a wheat crop.

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